Amendments to Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to the labeling of Fig. 1. This sheet, which includes Fig. 1, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 1. Fig. 1 has been properly labeled as "Prior Art."

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After the foregoing amendments, claims 1 – 4 and 6 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1 – 4 and 6 have been amended, and Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice. In the drawings, Fig. 1 has been properly labeled as "Prior Art." Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced into the application by these amendments.

Objections to the Drawings

The drawings stand objected to due to the lack of a legend designation for Fig. 1. A replacement sheet including Fig. 1 labeled as "Prior Art" is submitted herewith. Withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1 – 3, 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over DE 199 02 565 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,795,258 to Faass et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,443,846 to Dziedzic et al., Precision Steel Warehouse Specification, and Brown Metals Company Specification. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of these claims and respectfully submit that these claims are patentable over the art of record for at least the reasons set forth below.

Claim 1 is directed to a thrust washer for planet gears of a planetary gear box in which the thrust washer is adapted to be arranged with a positioning bore hole on planet gear pins fixed in a planet carrier so that thrust washers contact both

sides of the planet gears. For supplying lubricant, the planet gear pin is provided with an axial lubricant through hole and a radial lubricant through hole branching off from this axial hole, and the thrust washer is provided with axial through holes. The thrust washer positioning bore hole is provided connected with the additional through holes which are uniformly spaced apart from each other in a peripheral direction and which expand circumferentially from narrowed sections as they extend outwardly in a radial direction. See specifically Figure 3 at 9.2.1 for the narrowed section and 9.2 for the expansion circumferentially from the narrowed sections as they extend outwardly in the radial direction. Through this arrangement, a wider opening for lubrication is provided in the area of the bearing rollers.

DE 199 02 565 clearly fails to disclose this feature for enhanced lubrication. The through openings (24) spaced around the central hole do not expand circumferentially from narrowed sections as they extend outwardly in a radial direction, but rather diminish in size circumferentially from the center opening as they extend outwardly in a radial direction. See in particular Figure 3.

Faass et al. also fails in to disclose this feature. As shown in Figure 1, the rounded cutouts (44) which are spaced evenly around the central aperture (16) also do not expand circumferentially from narrowed sections as they extend outwardly in a radial direction, but rather would also diminish in their dimension from the

widest section where the aperture (16) is defined as they extend outwardly in the radial direction.

Finally, Dziedzic et al. and the two cited metal specifications wholly fail to address this and were only relied upon in the Action as disclosing tempered steel with a certain surface hardness, and are not at all directed to thrust washers for planetary gears.

As none of the references, whether considered alone or in combination disclose the specific arrangement of the additional through holes which are uniformly spaced apart from each other in a peripheral direction and which expand circumferentially from narrowed sections as they extend outwardly in a radial direction, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection of claim 1.

Claims 2, 3 and 6 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and should be patentable for the reasons noted above in connection with claim 1.

Claim 4 was also rejected in the Action under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over the prior combination further in view of applicants specification at page 1, line 30 with respect to the vibration grinding process. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

To the extent that claim 4 depends from claim 1, claim 4 should be patentable over the combination cited. There is no admission by applicants with respect to the

above-noted distinction with respect to claim 1. Additionally, with respect to claim 4, there is no admission of a vibration grinding process being utilized in connection with thrust washers in the application. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection of claim 4 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place this application in condition for allowance, or that a telephone interview will help to materially advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application, including claims 1 – 4 and 6, is in condition for allowance, and a Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Ploetz et al.

By_/Randolph J. Huis/____
Randolph J. Huis
Registration No. 34,626

Volpe and Koenig, P.C.
United Plaza, Suite 1600
30 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-4009
Telephone: (215) 568-6400
Facsimile: (215) 568-6499
RJH/dmm
Enclosure